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Deputy Assistant Director, Research & Reports

8 December 1959

Acting Chief, Economic Research Area, ORR

Topics for Future Discussion or Consideration
by the National Security Council

REFERENCE: Memo from Gordon Gray, Special Assistant to the
President, to the DCI dated 3 Dec 59, same
subject

This memorandum is in response to your request for suggestions from the Economic Research Area relating to topics of major national security interest which in our view warrant discussion by the National Security Council in the course of the next year. The following topics stem from discussion among the four Division Chiefs, Chief, Current Support Staff and myself, followed by written suggestions from each of the four Division Chiefs, copies of which are attached. The topics noted below are those which seem to me to meet the criteria suggested in Mr. Gray's memorandum of reference.

a. While there has been much discussion in the Executive Branch of the Government, including the NSC, of the challenge of Soviet economic growth, all of us feel that concerted attention needs to be given to the development of US policies aimed at meeting the challenge.

b. In the past five years we have observed a rapidly mounting Soviet research and development program primarily in the military field, presumably aimed at a technological breakthrough which would significantly affect the balance of military power between the USSR and the USA. Here again, what should be the US response? What efforts are being made by the US today and what measures and policies need to be adopted to insure against the danger posed by the Soviet R & D efforts?

c. The challenge of Mr. K's dramatic proposal for total disarmament is, of course, receiving attention but we would suggest that the NSC consider an appropriate US policy in the light of US residual military means and the economic and political consequences of various alternative courses of action.

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d. In the light of the development of Soviet aid and trade offensives much more attention will need to be devoted to Africa and Latin America in the coming year, both in terms of short term countermeasures and long term US policies aimed at bolstering Free World long term interest in these areas.

e. Continuing attention needs to be devoted to the Soviet Bloc civil defense program and plans and a determination made of appropriate US policies and measures in this field.



Attachment

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